Human scavenging at stations

2376. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that human scavenging is banned in the country;

(b) if so, what actions are taken to clean the Railway Tracks all over the country; particularly, at the Railway Stations;

(c) why manual scavenging is being allowed to continue in the Railways inspite of ban under the Central Act; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At major stations, washable aprons have been provided on concerned platform lines, which are cleaned with water jets. On ballasted track, night soil is allowed to decompose.

(c) There is no manual scavenging on Indian Railways.

(d) Does not arise.

Introduction of regular trains on Vasai-Deeva-Panvel line

2377. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to connect sub-urban areas to Mumbai city, there is only one shuttle train in a day;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that daily commuters have to face a lot of troubles and inconvenience;

(c) if so, whether there is a proposal under active consideration of Government to introduce regular trains connecting all the stations on Vasai-Deeva-Panvel line; and

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) At present, one pair of passenger train *i.e.*

KR-3/KR-4 Dadar-Ratnagiri Passenger is available between Dadar-Deeva-Panvel. In addition, 3 and 4 pairs of passenger trains are also available on Diva-Vasai Road and Deeva-Panvel sections respectively. These services are considered adequate for the present level of traffic offering on these sections.

(c) and (d) At present, there is no proposal to introduce trains on Mumbai/Vasai Road-Deeva-Panvel sections due to operational and resource constraints.

Rationalisation of freight rates

2378. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has earned Rs. 2,362/- crores during 2005-06 through freight ferrying and introduced a slew of incentive schemes to further boost revenue earnings;

(b) whether freight incentive scheme introduced is in line with the announcements made in Railway Budget;

(c) if so, whether these schemes would be beneficial to custmers transporting raw-material and finished products through Railways;

(d) whether his Ministry is rationalising freight rates and offer specific concessions to bulk-users; and

(e) to what extent it would help Railways' earnings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. Railway has earned Rs. 36286.97 crore (Provisional) during 2005-06 from freight business. Railway had introduced a slew of incentive schemes to further boost revenue earnings.

(b) and (c) Many incentive schemes have been announced in the Railway Budget 2006-07 to increase the freight earnings. Besides the schemes announced, other incentive schemes have also been launched after 1st April, 06. These schemes will be beneficial to customers transporting raw-material and finished products through railways.

(d) Rationalisation of freight rates is continuing for the last few years and is a continous process. Freight discount has been offered to bulk-users under various schemes.